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Concept Paper 1-03

REPORTERS ON THE GROUND: THE MILITARY AND MEDIA'S JOINT EXPERIENCE DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

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*“What needs to be built—and it needs to be built slowly and over time—is a level of trust. The only way you can do this is to let the young reporters walk beside young lieutenants in any war we fight.” – Joe Galloway**

The United States Army War College's Center for Strategic Leadership will conduct a workshop entitled Reporters on the Ground: The Military and the Media's Joint Experience During Operation Iraqi Freedom. The workshop, which will focus on all three levels of conflict – tactical, operational and strategic, will take place from 3 to 5 September 2003 at the Collins Center, Carlisle Barracks Pennsylvania.

BACKGROUND

During Operation Iraqi Freedom the Department of Defense (DoD) provided the first extensive media access to front line troops since the Vietnam War. Significant advancements in communications since the 1970s allowed reporters to file stories and to broadcast live from the front lines, giving the world an almost instantaneous view of the conflict, and perhaps changing forever the world's perception of warfare and their expectations of how future conflicts should be reported. How well this process worked, how it has effected other aspects of the news, what was learned by both the military and the media, and how this new relationship in an era of enhanced communications can be harnessed to better inform the public requires close and rigorous examination.

PURPOSE OF EVENT

This event will examine the embedded and unilateral media concepts as they were executed during Operation Iraqi Freedom from the perspective of both the military and media. The three-day event will bring together representatives from different levels of command within DoD and the Army, Marine and Special Operations components (ARCENT, MARCENT and SOCCENT) of United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) together with the media who accompanied them, to include embedded and non-embedded reporters, and the media's regional and bureau chiefs who supported those Correspondents. In addition several prominent academics from both military and media schools and think tanks will also participate. Specific areas of discussion may include:

- Did the outcome achieve the objectives of both DoD and the media?
- Did the access provided to the media satisfy their objectives?
- Did the program improve military–media relations?
- Did the effort improve the public's knowledge of Operation Iraqi Freedom?
- What needs to be accomplished to improve the program?

* Quote extracted from “Interview: Joe Galloway,” *Proceedings*, United States Naval Institute, Vol. 128, Iss. 2, February 2002.

The workshop is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Gain a better understanding of the impact of embedded media on public affairs and media relations
- Gain an understanding of issues for future decisions on embedding media and unilateral coverage
- Document the impact and begin to write the history of the embedded media program on military/media relations
- Begin the development of the Doctrine for future military/media relationships

The event will provide data to be input into the official military history of Operation Iraqi Freedom. It will also provide a reference point for the development of plans, policies and procedures for future operations.

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

Participants will arrive late Wednesday morning, 3 September, for registration. The workshop will begin at 1 p.m. in the Normandy Main Conference Room of the Collins Center with a welcome from the Commandant of the United States Army War College and a workshop overview by the Army's Chief of Public Affairs. The remainder of the workshop will be dedicated to presentations and discussions within a series of three overlapping panels – tactical, operational, and strategic. Each panel will examine a different aspect of the embedded media program, and will provide findings and recommendations on how to improve the process. Each panel will be composed of representatives from the media and military in order to obtain a balanced set of perspectives of the embedded media program from different military command levels and media viewpoints. On Wednesday Panel 1 will focus on the tactical aspect of the embed process. That evening participants will adjourn to the Great Room of the Stern Center on the campus of Dickinson College for cocktails and dinner and an address by reporter and author Mr. Joe Galloway (invited).

The workshop will resume Thursday morning with an out brief by Panel 1, attended by members of the operational panel. Panel 2 will consider the findings and recommendations of the tactical panel in their discussions, which will focus on the operational aspects of the process, to include perspectives from media producers and bureau chiefs. Panel 2 will make its presentations that afternoon to an audience that will include the members of Panel 3, which will cover the strategic view – or the view from Washington. That evening there will be dinner with the Honorable Victoria Clarke, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (invited), at the Letort View Community Center.

On Friday, the final day of the workshop, Panel 3 will co-chaired by Acting Army Chief of Staff General Jack Keane and Mr. Ted Koppel, ABC News (invited), and will include senior level representative of both the DoD and the media to frame a discussion of the national-level concept, planning, execution of, and changes to the embedded media program. This panel through its own discussions, and by utilizing the work of the previous two panels, will outline overarching findings and recommendations concerning the embedded media program in its entirety and recommend steps to improve the program for the future. The workshop will adjourn at approximately 12:00 noon.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The workshop, with the discourse it engenders and the recommendations its participants develop, should add significantly to future military-media relations and help further continued positive dialogue and interaction to assist in providing information to the American public. This event itself will form the basis for CSL issue papers, a detailed monograph for publication by the Strategic Studies Institute, as a source for historical documents published by the Center for Military History, as data for inclusion in military history archives, and as articles as desired by the media.

For further information on this workshop please contact:

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